

JANUARY 20, 1976

THE STATE OF THE UNION

ANNCR:

PRESIDENT GERALD FORD, AS REQUIRED TO BY THE CONSTITUTION, HAS REPORTED TO THE AMERICAN CONGRESS ON THE STATE OF THE UNION. VOA ANALYST EDWARD CONLEY DISCUSSES THAT MESSAGE:

VOICE:

THIS WAS PRESIDENT FORD'S SECOND STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS. BUT, AS A WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN POINTED OUT, IT REALLY WAS HIS FIRST CHANCE AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO FULLY SET FORTH HIS VIEWS ON THE CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY. WHEN MISTER FORD SPOKE TO CONGRESS IN JANUARY, 1975, HE HAD BEEN IN THE OVAL OFFICE A MERE FIVE MONTHS. HE APPEALED TO THE LEGISLATORS THEN FOR HELP IN OVERCOMING ECONOMIC AND OTHER PROBLEMS. THE STATE OF THE UNION WAS "NOT GOOD." SPEAKING TO CONGRESS THIS YEAR, MISTER FORD REPORTED THE STATE OF THE UNION IS BETTER -- IN MANY WAYS A LOT BETTER -- BUT HE WARNED: STILL NOT GOOD ENOUGH.

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE CHALLENGED CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO APPROACH THE COUNTRY'S DIFFICULTIES WITH "A NEW REALISM", BASED ON COMMON SENSE AND SELF DISCIPLINE. THAT NEW REALISM, CONTAINED IN PROPOSALS HE PRESENTED CONGRESS, WOULD DEEPLY CUT INTO FEDERAL SPENDING. THEY WOULD EFFECT SUCH UNTOUCHABLE ITEMS IN AN ELECTION YEAR AS FEDERALLY SPONSORED HEALTH AND RETIREMENT PROGRAMS. PRESIDENT FORD DID PROMISE TO SUPPORT A FURTHER TAX CUT FOR AMERICANS...AS LONG AS CONGRESS DID NOT SPEND MORE THAN HIS PROPOSED FISCAL BUDGET OF A LITTLE LESS THAN THREE HUNDRED NINETY FIVE THOUSAND MILLION DOLLARS. NOTING THAT THE NATION'S INFLATION HAS BEEN CUT FROM TWELVE TO

SIX POINT TWO PERCENT IN A YEAR, HE SAID IT MUST BE FURTHER LOWERED, BY HOLDING DOWN THE COST OF GOVERNMENT.

MISTER FORD SPENT ONLY A SHORT TIME COMMENTING ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SAYING AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY IS SOUND AND STRONG AND CALLING FOR AN INCREASED DEFENSE BUDGET. BUT HE SAID THE CONTROVERSY CAUSED BY AN INCREASED CONGRESSIONAL ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL POLICYMAKING MUST BE RESOLVED. HE ASSERTED HIS CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO, AS PRESIDENT, CONDUCT FOREIGN POLICY, AND HE WARNED THAT WHAT HE CALLED SHORT SIGHTED AND HASTY ACTION BY CONGRESS -- AS IN THE CASE OF ANGOLA, WHERE AID TO AMERICAN FRIENDS IS BEING DENIED BY LEGISLATION -- LIMITS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNATIONAL AND DEFENSE POLICIES. WHILE STATING HIS POWERS AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MISTER FORD PLEDGED TO WORK WITH CONGRESS THROUGH CONSULTATION AND ACCOMMODATION ON FOREIGN MATTERS AND TO FIND AN ANSWER TO ANOTHER WHITE HOUSE -- CONGRESSIONAL DISPUTE -- HOW TO RUN AN EFFECTIVE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY.

MISTER FORD -- LONG EXPERIENCED IN THE WAYS OF THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH -- SHOWED IN HIS ADDRESS THAT HIS ALMOST YEAR AND A HALF IN THE WHITE HOUSE HAS GIVEN HIM A FIRMER GRASP OF HIS PRESIDENTIAL DUTIES AND THE NATION'S PROBLEMS. STANDING BEFORE AN ELECTION YEAR CONGRESS HE TOLD THE LEGISLATORS TO WORK HONESTLY FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. "WE MUST PROMISE THEM NO MORE THAN WE CAN DELIVER," HE SAID, "AND DELIVER ALL THAT WE PROMISE."

THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH OUTLINED HIS PLANS TO TAKE A NATION WHICH WAS IN THE SICK BED LAST YEAR AND IS JUST REGAINING ITS HEALTH THIS YEAR BACK TO A CLEAR POSITION OF STRENGTH -- AT HOME AND ABROAD. IT NOW REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ACCEPT HIS BASIC REMEDY, WHICH MISTER FORD SAYS WILL MAKE THE UNITED STATES RESURGENT AGAIN.